



The Old Ironsides Report

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Women's Equality Day, Aug. 26

**Story by Staff Sgt. Conrad College
372nd MPAD**

BAGHDAD, Iraq -- Dr. Amal Rassam, an Iraqi-American woman, who has been teaching at a number of universities in the United States, and who is currently working as a contractor with Research Triangle Institute at the Coalition Provisional Authority headquarters in Baghdad, was the guest speaker at the 1st Armored Division's Women's Equality Day celebration Aug. 26.

The luncheon was at the new Bob Hope Dining Facility at the division's headquarters at the Baghdad International Airport.

Rassam started her talk by saying, to all the U.S. soldiers, "Thank you for everything you have done (here in Iraq), in very difficult circumstances."

Rassam spoke about the roles of women, men and children in Iraq (and other Islamic countries) and how these roles are very different from the roles that we have in the United States.

Traditionally, in Iraq, and other Islamic cultures, she said, men are the bread-winners and a woman's place is at home, being a mother -- a good mother -- to the children.

So, traditionally in Iraq, a woman's place is in the home, but things are changing. If you go into any Iraqi business or government agency, you will see many women working in the offices.

"In fact, Iraqi women outnumber men in the professions," she said. "But they need all the encouragement they can get. It's a tough environment." Some traditionalists still say that women should not work outside of the home, with the possible exceptions of working in education and in medical care.

In her remarks, which resembled a lecture in a college class, speaking about the differences in the lifestyles of women, men and children in Iraq, versus lifestyles in the United States, Rassam said there are many differences and she discussed several.

"The most important role of a woman (in Iraq) is that of a mother," Rassam said. "The most distinct role a woman can have is to be a good mother. In the West, a woman may be sought out by a man to be his wife as a companion, but there's less of that here."

Most marriages are arranged, maybe even at birth, she said. The arranged marriage represents an alliance -- a contract -- between the families involved. The decision is based on what is best for the extended family groups, so it has nothing to do with love or individualism, she said.

But, she said, among the middle-class, educated women in Iraq today, many women have marriages that were not arranged by their parents. But, even in those cases, a woman would never marry a man whom her family did not approve of, Rassam said.

The laws in Iraq say a Muslim woman cannot marry a non-Muslim man, but a Muslim man can marry a non-Muslim woman. The children of that marriage would automatically be Muslims, she said, since children in Iraq automatically take on the nationality and religion of the father. The birth certificate of the baby would indicate: religion, Muslim.

Another differences, is that in Iraq, a man can divorce very easily, but a woman cannot. And a man can have up to four wives at a time, but this is rarely done and is usually done only in the tribes in rural areas, Rassam said.

When an Iraqi woman gets married, she does not change her last name. So, even as an adult, she is known as her father's daughter, not as her husband's wife, Rassam said.



Dr. Amal Rassam, an American college professor, born in Iraq, was the guest speaker at the 1st Armored Division's Women's Equality Day luncheon Aug. 26 at the Baghdad International Airport.

Photo by Spc. Shauna McRoberts, 1AD PAO

Traditionally, a woman cannot travel outside of Iraq, unless she is accompanied by a male relative, usually her husband or father, especially if the woman is young, under 45, she said. This is to prevent Iraqi women from marrying men from outside the country. If an Iraqi woman marries outside of the country and makes her home in some other country that would be considered a loss to the community in Iraq.

Rassam was raised in Mosul, Iraq, and later in Baghdad. She traveled to the United States for graduate studies and received a Ph.D. in anthropology. She has been teaching at a number of universities in the United States, including the University of California at Berkeley and the City University of New York.

She has taken time out from teaching to work as a consultant for development projects in the Middle East, Africa and central Asia. She has two daughters and three grandchildren.

The Women's Equality Day ceremony was sponsored by the 1st Armored Division's Equal Opportunity Office. Sgt. 1st Class Johnny Pippen, the division's senior equal opportunity adviser, served as the host for the event.

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Alvin Sykes, division chaplain, opened the ceremony with a prayer. This was followed by Dr. (Lt. Col.) Mark Harris, division surgeon, playing his guitar and singing a song that he wrote.

After Rassam's talk, Sgt. Vernice McFarland, 159th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), and Spc. Gloria Jackson, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Armored Division, sang a medley of songs.

Brig. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, division commander, closed the meeting by saying, "We're very proud of our women soldiers."

NEWS

Postwar Iraq Toll Exceeds Combat Deaths

KHALIS, Iraq (AP) - The toll of U.S. troops killed in postwar Iraq surpassed the number killed in major combat on Tuesday, reaching 139 with the death of a soldier in a roadside bombing. Also Tuesday, hundreds of U.S. soldiers raided a northern town in a bid to smash a crime ring wanted for murder, gunrunning and a terrorist attack on a police station that killed an American soldier earlier this month.

SAT Math and Verbal Scores Hit Highs

The nation's high school class of 2003 achieved the best score on the math section of the SAT exam in at least 36 years, while students' verbal scores hit a 16-year high. The College Board, which owns the nation's most popular college entrance exam, said Tuesday that this year's high school graduates had an average cumulative score of 1,026 points on the SAT, up six points from 2002. Both the average math (519) and verbal (507) scores were up three points from last year.

A Smart Tip From 1AD Safety

CONTROL YOUR COMBAT STRESS

- Focus on the mission
- Follow SOP's
- Keep open communication with your team
- Share grief with a friend, a leader or a chaplain
- Support each other

Chaplain's Thought for the Day **A Blazing Fire**

Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forward.

--Soren Kierkegaard

Once, in a small village, there was a huge fire. The blaze spread and several homes and businesses were burned to the ground. After a long while, the fire was brought under control and put out. Villagers banded together to rebuild their town, but one quite persistent young man insisted on searching the rubble for the cause of the fire. Impatient townspeople scolded him, saying, "Why waste time searching for causes? Knowing them won't put out the blaze or repair the damage." "I know," replied the young man, "but knowing why might prevent other fires." Sometimes we have to look at painful past experiences in order to prevent their recurrence. When we understand ourselves better, we can move beyond the past and walk toward the future with surer, safer steps.

ENTERTAINMENT

Toby Keith Gets Most CMA Nominations

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) - Toby Keith got seven nominations for Country Music Association Awards on Tuesday, with Johnny Cash picking up four, two involving his rendition of a song by rock act Nine Inch Nails. Keith led all nominees, with nods for best entertainer, male vocalist, and album of the year for "Unleashed." "Beer for My Horses," a collaboration with Willie Nelson, was nominated for best song, single, music video and vocal event.

Fox News Drops Suit Vs. Franken Over Book

NEW YORK (AP) -- Fox News dropped its lawsuit against Al Franken, shortly after a federal judge refused to block the liberal humorist from using the Fox slogan "Fair and Balanced" on the cover of his book. The lawsuit had sought unspecified damages from Franken and Penguin Group, publisher of "Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them: A Fair and Balanced Look at the Right." "It's time to return Al Franken to the obscurity that he's normally accustomed to," Fox News spokeswoman Irena Steffen said. Publicity surrounding the case helped boost Franken's book to the top of the Amazon.com best-seller list. Penguin rushed the book into stores early and ordered additional copies printed after being sued.

MUSIC

Top 5 Singles:

1. Crazy in Love -- Beyonce featuring Jay-Z
2. Right Thurr -- Chingy
3. Shake Ya Tailfeather -- Nelly, P. Diddy & Murphy Lee
4. P.I.M.P -- 50 Cent
5. Into You -- Fabolous featuing Tamia or Ashanti

Top 5 Albums:

1. Greatest Hits Volume II -- Alan Jackson
2. A Mark, A Mission, A Brand, A Scar -- Dashboard Confessional
3. Bad Boys II -- Soundtrack
4. Fallen -- Evanescence
5. Dangerously in Love -- Beyonce

BOOKS

Bestsellers:

1. The Teeth of the Tiger
Tom Clancy -- Putnam
2. The South Beach Diet
Arthur Agatston -- Rodale
3. Seabiscuit: An American Legend
Laura Hillenbrand -- Ballantine
4. The Da Vinci Code
Dan Brown -- Doubleday
5. Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix
J.K. Rowling, art by GrandPré -- Arthur Levine/Scholastic

SPORTS

Sampras Retires From Tennis at U.S. Open

NEW YORK (AP) -- On an emotional first night of the U.S. Open, Pete Sampras left tennis - at peace with himself and his place in the history of the sport. At the start of the season's final Slam, where he won his first Grand Slam title in 1990 and his last a year ago, Sampras made his retirement official Monday night. And he picked the perfect spot - the place where he burst on the tennis landscape as a 19-year-old, the youngest champion in Open history. His dossier speaks volumes - a record 14 Grand Slams among 64 career titles, a record six years and 286 weeks at No. 1. He was a throwback, equipped with a booming serve and a devastating serve-and-volley game, always dressed in tennis white, idolizing the past champions like Rod Laver and Don Budge. He beat some heavyweights such as Ivan Lendl and John McEnroe on his way to that first crown. And when he won it, he remembered feeling a bit confused. "I wasn't sure what I wanted," he said. "I won't say I got lucky. I played two great weeks of tennis." There would be five Open titles, seven championships at Wimbledon and two in Australia, a record 14 breaking the mark of 12 held for so long by Roy Emerson. Perhaps the most satisfying came last September. Winless for nearly two years and viewed as an also-ran in a tournament he once dominated, Sampras was dismissed as no threat, seeded at No. 17. The buzz was that he was done, that he had no business still playing. And then he showed everybody why he had hung around, winning the title in an emotional final against Andre Agassi. "I wanted to win one more," he said. "It was a tough year and a half. To win last year felt great. Once I did that, I felt I really have climbed a tall mountain." After that, Sampras went home to California, in no hurry to decide his future. He became a father for the first time and every so often thought about playing again. "I kept on pulling out of events, always thinking I might play Wimbledon again. And once I started doing some practicing and training for Wimbledon and my heart wasn't into it, I knew that it was time. I know in my heart that I'm done, I'm at peace with it. That's great." There was one last thing to do. He needed to say goodbye. "It's not painful, it's emotional," he said. "It's coming to terms with something that is a passion of mine, that I love to do, that's been my life. To say goodbye to it, to say I'm not going to play again, it's emotional. It's a closed chapter. "I'm also realistic in knowing that my time is done. I've done everything I can do. I'm at peace with stopping. It's time to move on." As he stood on the court, the crowd roared, the noise spilling down, section by section, engulfing Sampras. He could not help crying. Minutes later, he made one last trip around the court, carrying his son Christian in his arms. This time, he was smiling broadly. His last goodbye was complete.

Johnson Wins as D-Backs Stop Padres 11-8

PHOENIX (AP) -- Randy Johnson feels almost like the pitcher who won the last four NL Cy Young awards. The difference is he's still trying to master his favorite pitch. "I feel like my velocity is there," Johnson said Monday night after snapping his first losing streak in four years as the Arizona Diamondbacks beat the San Diego Padres 11-8. "You know, my slider has been so good over the years that I count on it a lot to be effective out there," Johnson said. "And when I'm not getting swings on that, I have to throw my fastball. And the situation has been the case my last four or five starts, where my slider has not been as good." The Diamondbacks gained ground in the crowded NL wild-card race, moving within 1 1/2 games of Philadelphia and Florida, who are tied for the lead. Eight teams are within three games of the Phillies and Marlins.

Oddly Enough:

Wedding Guest Bites Off Man's Finger

CORUNNA, Mich. (AP) -- A wedding guest bit off part of a man's finger during a reception at a banquet hall, police said. Michael VanStrate, 31, was arraigned Monday on two counts of assault with intent to do great bodily harm less than murder, one count of aggravated assault and one count of simple assault following the weekend incident. The Owosso man also smeared cake on a 9-year-old boy and knocked out a 49-year-old woman, Corunna Police Sgt. Kevin Clark told The Flint Journal. After witnesses said VanStrate, who is 6-foot-2 and weighs 260 pounds, smeared cake on the boy's face, Clark said "the father came to the son's rescue, struggling with the suspect, and he apparently had his finger bit off at that time." The bridegroom, 21, then intervened, Clark said. Police said VanStrate later elbowed the 49-year-old woman in the head during the scuffle, knocking her out temporarily. State troopers and officers from Corunna, a community about 25 miles west of Flint, eventually subdued VanStrate early Saturday. The guest whose right index finger was bitten off between the first and second joints was taken to Hurley Medical Center in Flint, where doctors were unable to reattach the digit. The bridegroom was treated and released at Memorial Healthcare Center in Owosso. VanStrate remained in custody after Shiawassee County District Judge Ward Clarkson set bond at \$25,000.

On This Day In History: **August 27th 1952**

As the presidential election of 1952 begins to heat up, so do accusations concerning communism in America. The "Red Scare"--the widespread belief that international communism was operating in the United States--came to dominate much political debate in 1952. On August 27, 1952, the New York Times front page contained three stories suggesting the impact of the Red Scare on the upcoming election. The three related stories from the front page of the Times indicated just how deeply the Red Scare had penetrated American society. Accusations about communists in the film, radio, and television industries, in the Department of State and the U.S. Army, in all walks of American life, had filled the newspapers and airwaves for years, but by 1952, many Americans were convinced that communists were at work in the United States and must be rooted out and hunted down.

Source: historychannel.com

Across

- 1 Pricey cracker spread
 5 Like some trimmings
 9 Scalawag
 14 "___, poor Yorick!"
 18 Former spouses
 19 African lilies
 21 Wreck completely
 22 Break in the action
 23 Actress Lanchester
 24 Discovery of 1930
 25 Sports place
 26 Malay boat
 27 Porky's girlfriend
 29 Li'l Abner's mom
 31 Stadium near the Unisphere
 32 Hair dressing
 34 Brooklyn suffix
 35 Try to advance on a fly out
 39 Silent performers
 42 Con games
 47 Flattened circle
 48 In dreamland
 51 Add fringe to
 54 Melville romance
 55 Bias
 56 Unscheduled train stop
 58 "___ Flanders"
 59 Placed above
 61 Aaron's daughter
 62 Go along with
 64 Cardiology adjective
 66 Engagement symbol
 68 Deli specialty
 69 Eastern Europeans
 72 Eastern European
 74 Not in use, as a theater
 76 Reaches across
 77 More diminutive
 79 Marsh bird
 81 Floor finisher
 83 Mohair source
 85 "The Shoes of the Fisherman" author
 87 Dish dryer
 91 Film holder
 92 Overdo it
 95 Consumer draw
 96 Poetic landscape
 97 Fencing blade
 98 Coat-of-arms figures
 99 Humorist Bombeck
 100 Make jubilant
 102 Wallet item
 104 Fur-trade pioneer
 105 ___ Alamos, NM
 108 Black cuckoo
 109 "Chapter Two" actor
 112 Computer-printer element
 118 Meteorologist
 124 Where all "strade" lead
 125 South African region
 126 Still
 127 Give motivation to
 128 Gray subj.
 129 Obliterate
 130 Glamour puss
 131 Brain scans: Abbr.
 132 "Singin' in the Rain" name
 133 Took out
 134 Tournament ranking
 135 Brio

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G	E	N	E		D	E	L	E	D		S	E	E	D		Z	E	S	T

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Down

- 1 Quick glance
 2 Hot-rod rod
 3 Set of questions
 4 Biblical brother
 5 ___ lazuli
 6 Fifth word of the Koran
 7 Two-seat auto
 8 Himalayan enigma
 9 Flour or sugar
 10 James Cain character
 11 Egyptian sun god
 12 Parson's home
 13 Frolics
 14 Rival rival
 15 Skulk about
 16 Baseball family name
 17 Bridge coup
 20 Most sodden
 28 Tot's "time out"
 30 Thumbs-up vote
 33 Caveat ___
 35 37 Down's dog
 36 Tel ___
 37 Dorothy of Kansas
 38 Kind of light
 39 "Little Women" character
 40 Eye parts
 41 "Star Wars" initials
 43 Turn out all right
 44 One-celled animal
 45 Like lava
 46 Wise lawgivers
 48 A great distance
 49 Narrow openings
 50 Lords' mates
 52 ___ long way (last)
 53 MIT grad
 57 Saharan
 60 Also-ran
 63 Move to 0, maybe
 65 Elbow-to-elbow
 67 On the house
 69 Deprive of sustenance
 70 In succession
 71 Jessica's portrayer
 73 Writer Harte
 75 Prepared to propose
 78 Blow a gasket
 80 Refuse holder
 82 Work shift for many
 84 Drink daintily
 86 Great
 88 Merlyn's student
 89 Sailor's saint
 90 Shakespearean king
 93 Kauai keepsake
 94 Escorted a group
 101 TV Tarzan
 103 Used the phone
 104 Santa ___ winds
 106 Had possession of
 107 Divvy up
 109 Mythical labyrinth locale
 110 Eagle's nest
 111 Was in a play
 112 Tow along
 113 Top of the line
 114 "___ Old Cowhand"
 115 Overfill
 116 List shortener
 117 Soothe
 119 Responsibility
 120 Canal site
 121 Shoe stretcher
 122 Dairy purchase
 123 Remainder